



The Civic Forum Institute



British
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Gaza Journalists Attend Ethical Media Training

Following a week of uncertainty due to border closures, young journalists from Gaza finally had the chance to participate in Civic Forum Institute's Ethical Journalism Training programme today. Seventeen journalists were issued permits to travel to Ramallah last week to attend the workshop alongside West Bank based journalists, from 23rd to 25th March, but were unable to travel when ERES checkpoint was closed. On hearing that the crossing would finally re-open, CFI immediately revised the plans to add an additional workshop for the Gaza journalists.

Muhammed Abu Diab, Director of CFI, said, *'we were so disappointed that our friends from Gaza were unable to travel last week, as due to time constraints and other issues, we had already been forced to limit the activities of this project in Gaza itself, and this further limited their involvement in this important work'*. Speaking about the additional workshop he said, *'this solution is not perfect. The training will be shorter and the participants will not have the chance to share their ideas and experiences with their West Bank counterparts, but it is the best we can do in the circumstances and we are hopeful that this is just the first stage of work in this area and we will ensure that the participation of journalists from Gaza, and the interaction between media practitioners in Gaza and the West Bank, are maximised in our future efforts'*.

The training focused on the importance of employing ethical approaches in everyday journalism, the emerging role of social media, and looked at specific issues around election reporting including use of opinion polls and the challenge of elections for journalists through the world. The one day session was led by Emad Al Hady, a highly experienced trainer from Egypt and the US. Speaking about this, and the previous workshops, he said, *'it has been an eye-opening experience for me personally to see the potential that this large pool of young Palestinian journalists has. They are all striving to learn as much as they can about their craft, harness their tools and abide by these ethical principles to which we all aspire, wherever we are from'*.

This training is one component of Civic Forum Institute's (CFI) project focused on Ethical Reporting of Elections, in collaboration with Electoral Reform International Services (ERIS) and funded by the British Consulate in Jerusalem. The project has included the development of a Code of Conduct for Election Reporting, developed by a group of senior media figures from the West Bank and Gaza in November. Over 200 media practitioners have signed up to the Code to date and more continue to do so at www.cfip.org. The project concluded with an Ethical Media Forum attended by around 50 senior media figures where ethical issues were discussed and recommendations for future work were developed.

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